United Nations S/2016/116

Security Council

Distr.: General
4 February 2016
English
Original: Russian

Letter dated 4 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In connection with the letter dated 3 February 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, Mr. Y. Halit Çevik, regarding "another violation of Turkish airspace by a Russian combat aircraft" which allegedly took place on 29 January 2016, and in response to the continuing allegations of the Turkish authorities, we would like to draw attention to the following points.

The Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation fully clarified the baseless accusations made by the Turkish authorities during a briefing held on 1 February 2016. We reiterate: there was no violation of Turkish air borders by any aircraft from the Russian Aerospace Defence Forces in Syria, as shown by all objective control data for flights over northern Syria. Ankara has yet to provide any factual or objective evidence to substantiate its allegations. A direct request to provide such information, from the Russian Embassy in Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Turkey, went unanswered. The note received from the Foreign Service of that country describing the coordinates of the "incident", and the similar démarche of the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations, cannot serve as unbiased proof to support Ankara's claims.

It is notable, against this backdrop, that the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and high-ranking officials in Turkey have considered themselves entitled to threaten Russia, to blackmail it with "serious consequences" and to claim "escalatory behaviour" by Russia in the regional situation. It is Ankara, however, that is pursuing the course towards escalation set on 24 November 2015.

In the context of its provocative stance, including in the letter of its Permanent Representative, Turkey blames Russia for declining to organize a telephone conversation between President Erdoğan of Turkey and President Putin of the Russian Federation. Given the Turkish leadership's refusal to acknowledge responsibility for downing a Russian plane outside the territory of Turkey and for the death of our soldiers, we consider its provocative attempt to use new allegations of a "violation" of airspace as a pretext for resuming direct dialogue to be nothing more than propaganda.

We have requested objective control data from the leadership of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in connection with statements by the Turkish authorities that NATO detected the violation first. However, we have received no

hard evidence there either. There is nothing to substantiate the information mentioned by Mr. Çavuşoğlu, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey, and which is also contained in the letter from the Permanent Representative of Turkey dated 3 February 2016, regarding the "violation" that was "detected" by the NATO Combined Air Operations Centre in Spain.

We call on the members of the Security Council and on the entire international community to take a sober and balanced approach to Turkey's accusations. The continuing attacks against Russia by Ankara must not distract attention from Turkey's destructive actions in relation to Syria, including in the area of counter-terrorism and efforts within the framework of intra-Syrian negotiations.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) V. **Churkin**